(d) Does not arise.

Criterion for Allocation of Fair Price Shops

5033. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will thle Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government have advised the States to give special consideration to the applicants belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the allocation of Fair Price Shops; and

(b) if so, what is the Statewise number of persons belonging to Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes, who own Fair Price Shops as on date?

THE MINSTER OF CIVIL SUPPLES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) The operational responsibility for implementation of Public Distribution System (PDS) is that of the State Governments and UT Administrations. Decisions relating to eligibility criteria and allotment of fair price shops, are matters within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments|UT Administrations. However, the Central Government has odvised the State Governments|UT Administrations to reserve a percentage of fair price shops for allotment to SC|STs and women. The Central Government does not maintain data on fair price shops earmarked and allocated to SCs|STs.

Decline in availability of quality products

5054. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the availibity of quality products in the country, particularly food items have declined.

(b) if so, whether the Bureau of Indian Standards and other Central agencies have failed to put a check for inferior products;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what concrete measures Government propose to adopt so that only quality products are available in the market?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Bureau of Indian Standards has brought out a very large number of National Standards on the quality of various food products through a consensus process involving various Government and statutory organisation like Directorate General of Health Services. Directorate of Marketing and Inspection and Ministry of Food Processing Industries. These standards also incorporate the mandatory, requirements of the PFA Rules and are by and large harmonized by international standards.

Through BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme, under which a licence is granted to a food product manufacturer who is able to ensure the conformity of his product to the relevant Indian Stanadrds, the quality of the food products for the consumer is ensured. Also, the food items packed under AGMARK Quality Control Programme are pretested and certified as per notified standards.

(d) While the BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme is mainly voluntary in nature, for certain products like food colours and food additives, vanaspati, infant milk food, infant formulate and condenced milk, conformity to

the BIS Certification Marking Scheme is mandatory under the law. Samples of various articles of food are being regularly drawn by the Prevention of Food Adulteration enforcement agencies of the States|Union Territories under the provisions of the PFA Act, 1954, to ensure the quality of food stuffs manufactured|stored|kept for sale for human consumption in various parts of the country.

Utilisation of major portion of coal in power generation

5055. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 70 per cent of the coal output of the country is used for power generation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that generally the cool is of poor quality and its mining unscientific; and

(c) if so, the steps under consideration to improve the quality of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir. About 70 per cent of the raw coal produced in the country is being consumed by power sector.

(b) and (c) In the process of mining of coal especially in opencast mines some stones/shales/extraneous materials may get mixed with coal. Following steps are being taken by coal companies to improve the quality of coal sent to ocnsumers including power houses;

(i) An action plan for installation of feeder breakers and coal handling plants is being implemented to ensure quality of coal.

(ii) Stones are being segregated at the titme of loading of coal.

(iii) wherever feasible slow moving picking belts are being provided in coal handling plants for manual picking of shale and stone pieces.

(iv) Better supervision is being ensured at the time of loading to maintain the quality of coal and to develop quality consciousness among workers, supervisors and executives engaged at railway sidings.

(v) All consumers are encouraged to post their representatives at loading points to ensure quality of coal despatches. Consumers specially power sector is constantly reminded to make payment of arrears of dues and to comply with cash and carry system or open irrevocable letter of credit covering the price of coal.

(vi) Coal India Limited proposed to set up washeries under Build Own Operate bosis to beneficiate non-cooking coal which could be used by power houses.

As regards unscientific mining, any such cases reported by Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS), Coal Controller etc. are brought to the notice of the Coal Companies for corrective action.

Writing off coal stock shortages

5056. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) how much coal stock shortage has been written off upto the 31st March, 1994 in different subsidiaries during last five years;

(b) what were the reasons therefor;

(c) whether anybody has been made accountable for such shortages of stock of coal which had to be written off causing loss too the nation.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?